

Message Text

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ACTION ORM-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 ISO-00 SS-15 CIAE-00 SP-02 L-02

SR-02 IO-10 PRS-01 SAM-01 INR-05 NSC-05 /063 W

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R 170822Z DEC 74

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3213

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 13593

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CH HK SREF

SUBJ: HONG KONG 13324

1. HONG KONG GOVERNMENT POLICY OF RETURNING TO CHINA

"ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS" CAUGHT ENTERING HONG KONG IS CONTINUING WITH LITTLE ADVERSE LOCAL PUBLIC REACTION. TO DATE, 158 REFUGEES HAVE BEEN ARRESTED BY POLICE ON ENTRY INTO HONG KONG. ACCORDING TO HKG SOURCE, ALL BUT A "HANDFUL" HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO CHINA.

2. HKG HOPES FOR TIGHTENING OF PRC POLICIES ON PERMITTING

"LEGAL IMMIGRANTS", I.E., THOSE HAVING VALID PRC EXIT PERMITS INTO HONG KONG, HAVE NOT YET BEEN REALIZED. LEGAL IMMIGRANTS THUS FAR IN DECEMBER HAVE REMAINED AT AVERAGE OF 97 PER DAY, WELL ABOVE THE 50 PER DAY FIGURE WHICH HKG WOULD LIKE TO SEE.

3. PUBLIC AND PRESS REACTION IN HONG KONG REMAINS ALMOST

SOLIDLY BEHIND HKG ACTION. ALTHOUGH MANY HONG KONG PAPERS CARRIED DECEMBER 10 STORY DATED TAIPEI IN WHICH AN ALLEGED RECENT REFUGEE CLAIMED THAT THREE PERSONS REPATRIATED TO CHINA BY HKG HAD BEEN EXECUTED, STORY WAS NOT GIVEN

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PROMINENCE AND ELICITED NO FOLLOW-UP EDITORIALS OR COMMENTS.

4. MAJOR DISCORDANT VOICE IS FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW'S DEREK DAVIES, WHO CLAIMS THAT REFUGEES WERE MOSTLY YOUNG AND FIT, DO NOT QUALIFY FOR HKG-PROVIDED HOUSING, EDUCATION OR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, AND ACCEPT THE MOST MENIAL JOBS (WHICH MORE SOPHISTICATED HONG KONG BELONGERS SHUN). THUS, DAVIES ARGUES, IT IS THE LEGAL IMMIGRANTS WHO STRAIN HONG KONG 'S ECONOMY AND THE HKG MOVE AGAINST ILLEGALS IS STRICTLY IN THE HOPE THAT A "GRATEFUL CHINA WILL RESPOND BY REDUCING THE FLOW OF LEGAL IMMIGRANTS."
CROSS

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